Part 2
Planning for action

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Introduction

An overview of planning

Good planning is essential to successful and sustainable action. Good planning enables you to maximise your opportunities and reduce the risk of failure. It provides you with a framework for developing, implementing, and evaluating action; it helps you to make the best use of scarce time and resources; and above all it ensures that your action is defined and driven by a clear purpose.

However, planning can sometimes become complicated and difficult to manage. One way to keep it simple is to break it down into stages. This part of the handbook introduces an approach to help you to develop relevant and focused responses to the problems that you face. It can be adopted at various levels of detail, depending on the length and breadth of the action that you aim to undertake. The process can be divided into six phases, listed below. Each phase is reduced to steps which, used sequentially, will help you to develop your plans and strategies for action.

There are always many activities that you might undertake in response to a particular situation. Planning provides a rational basis for choosing those activities that are likely to be most effective. The phases described below are designed to build on one another. However, it is not necessary to follow the entire process without deviation. You should use only the elements that apply to your own context.

Phase 1: Assessing the situation
Phase 2: Establishing goals
Phase 3: Developing a strategy
Phase 4: Planning the activity
Phase 5: Implementation and monitoring
Phase 6: Evaluation

Each of the six phases of planning represents a distinct stage in an organisation’s preparation for action. Figure 2.1 indicates in general terms the sequence in which the process is approached. However, at all stages, it is important to look back to ensure that you keep your work focused on achieving the changes that you
want to achieve. All phases of the planning cycle are important. They will help to inform your choice of action, to ensure that you act in the most effective way at the right time.

**Figure 2.1: The planning cycle**

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**Participatory planning**

Analysing your situation is the basis of good planning. It involves reflecting on the problems that you face, and identifying the best means to tackle them. Involving a wide range of people in the process should improve your planning, for the following reasons:

- The planning process should be a learning experience during which participants reach an improved common understanding of their problems and commit themselves to working towards a common goal.
- The more people you involve, and the more contributions that the process stimulates, the better the range of options and ideas that you are likely to identify.
• Involving those who will be responsible for implementing the plans helps to ensure that the plans are realistic, based on the full range of available strengths, and likely to help you to consider the role that each will play when taking action.

In each phase we introduce participatory planning tools that are designed to help you to develop your analysis. Each tool is briefly introduced and illustrated with an example.

**How to use the planning tools in a training or planning workshop**

Each of the tools listed in Table 2.1 is featured in the planning process described in this part of the handbook. They are presented in the form of handouts which can be photocopied and used independently. The handouts are identified by the presence of a tinted line down the side of the page.
Table 2.1: Using the right tools and techniques at the right time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool or technique</th>
<th>Most useful for ...</th>
<th>In which phase of the planning cycle is this included?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem and solution tree</td>
<td>Understanding problems and solutions as part of assessing the situation</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solutions table</td>
<td>Outlining the range of solutions available to you</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWOT analysis</td>
<td>Analysing the environment as part of assessing the situation</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranking solutions</td>
<td>Prioritising solutions as part of establishing goals</td>
<td>Phase 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framing the issue</td>
<td>Building support for your work, both internally and externally</td>
<td>Phase 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forcefield analysis</td>
<td>Identifying stakeholders as part of developing strategy</td>
<td>Phase 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channels of influence: a matrix</td>
<td>Devising an influencing strategy</td>
<td>Phase 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence map</td>
<td>Devising an influencing strategy</td>
<td>Phase 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>Developing an action plan</td>
<td>Phase 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting indicators</td>
<td>Implementing and monitoring your programme</td>
<td>Phase 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tools presented in this part of the handbook are designed to help you to understand the various elements involved in developing effective strategies and action plans. They are usually best used to facilitate group planning. Many of them contain an element of brainstorming, which is done best with others as a group exercise.

You can use the activity sheets associated with the tools either to facilitate discussion with an experienced planning group, or for training a group that is new to planning techniques.

Although every situation is different, the following guidelines should help you to use the worksheets most effectively:

- Participants should be divided into groups, consisting ideally of 4–7 people.
- Each activity is designed to be completed in about one hour.
- Hand out the activity sheets to each member of the group and ask one person to fill it in on behalf of the whole group.
- Another member of the group should be designated as time-keeper to ensure that people do not waste time on irrelevant details.

The golden rules of brainstorming

**Nothing is wrong – question nothing – put everything down on paper.**

When the exercise is complete, it is time to go back, test ideas more rigorously, and select the ones that are most relevant, workable, and likely to succeed.
Notes on organising a training workshop\textsuperscript{1}

Training should be well planned; preparation is vital. Box 16 lists questions to consider.

**Box 17: Why, who, when, where, what for, what, and how?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why?</th>
<th>• What are the aims and objectives of the training course or programme?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are they realistic in terms of what the training can achieve?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who?</td>
<td>• Who should attend?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Who will provide administrative and logistical support?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When?</td>
<td>• What time best suits the group and its members’ needs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How much time should be allowed for socialising, networking, and relaxing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where?</td>
<td>• Find a venue that is available, convenient, and within budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What for?</td>
<td>• What is the gap between what people know and what they need to know in order to be effective in their work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What?</td>
<td>• Based on the course or programme objectives, what will the contents of the training be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How?</td>
<td>• What training methods will you use?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the exercises in this manual are based on a series of ‘closed’ questions, requiring specific, formal answers. These help the group to maintain its focus when dealing in a limited time with a complicated process. But as part of a training programme, these sessions would need to be interspersed with activities that stimulate creativity – such as brainstorming and role plays – with no pre-determined outcome. Different people have different learning styles, so it is important to introduce variety into any training course.

**Role of the workshop facilitator**

Facilitating is a skill which requires an ability to listen, an understanding of group dynamics, and the ability to encourage respect and understanding within the group. In most cases, ideally, there should be at least two facilitators working together, to share ideas and workload. They will have practical responsibilities, in addition to listening to and observing the group and dealing constructively with any problems that arise. Facilitators’ responsibilities include the following:

- setting clear programme objectives
- providing clear instructions to participants
- providing materials
- keeping to time
- encouraging balanced participation
- asking provocative questions to encourage new lines of thinking
- providing real examples to illustrate successful uses of the tools
- offering additional personal experiences to less experienced group members
Figure 2.3: The six phases of planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHASE</th>
<th>KEY QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS</th>
<th>STEPS INVOLVED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1 – assessing the situation</td>
<td>What is the context that you are operating in, and what strengths do you bring to meet the challenge of that context?</td>
<td>Understanding problems &amp; solutions Mapping solutions Analysing the environment Analysing your strengths &amp; weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2 – establishing your goals</td>
<td>What kind of change are you seeking, and who needs to make the change?</td>
<td>Prioritising solutions Setting goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3 – developing your strategy</td>
<td>How can you most effectively influence those who need to change?</td>
<td>Framing the issue Identifying stakeholders Devising an influencing strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 4 – planning the activity</td>
<td>Who will do what and when?</td>
<td>Setting objectives Developing an action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 5 - implementing and monitoring</td>
<td>Are you doing the right things at the right times, and are they working?</td>
<td>Implementing programmes and monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 6 – evaluating</td>
<td>What have you achieved and learned, and what should you do differently in future?</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phase 1: Assessing the situation

Introduction

This phase includes the following steps:

- Understanding problems and solutions
- Mapping solutions
- Analysing the environment

It is always tempting to start by taking action immediately. But if you want your action to be targeted and effective, it is worth taking time to identify what kind of action is likely to be most successful. The starting point for this is to understand the situation in which you are working.

This phase in the process is important in enabling you to use limited resources most effectively, for the following reasons.

- Unless you have a common and clear understanding of the problems that you face, as well as their causes, consequences, and possible solutions, you may soon find that you are unclear about what it is exactly that you are trying to change, how and why.
- Unless you take into account the factors – both internal and external – that may either help or hinder your work, you could find that your programme of action encounters difficulties that you had failed to predict.

Once you have considered the situation in which you plan to act, you are in a much better position to be clear about and consider further what you can achieve.

Understanding problems and their solutions

Before you take action, it is important to understand in some detail the problems that you face, and their causes. This will help you to decide where you should focus your efforts in addressing them. Ask yourself the following questions.
Key questions to address

What is the issue that we face?

What are the underlying causes?

- In other words, why does this problem exist? What are the roots of the problem?

What are the consequences?

For instance:

- What are the consequences of small-arms proliferation in terms of public health?
- What are the development and environmental consequences?
- What are the humanitarian consequences?

How could the causes of the problems be tackled, and what would the outcomes be if this were to happen?

- How has related change come about in the past?
- What can we learn from this?

One tool to help you to answer these questions is a Problem and Solution Tree (see Planning Tool 1).
Planning Tool 1: Problem and Solution Tree

Problem and Solution Trees can help you to assess a situation. See the example below, prepared by participants from FIQ, an NGO based in Kosovo, at a seminar on small arms organised by Saferworld in January 2003.

Context

Understanding problems and identifying their solutions is the starting point for action. It is vital to have a good understanding of the problems that you face, as well as their causes, consequences, and possible solutions. Without it, any organisation may soon become unclear about some of the fundamentals of its programme – what it is trying to change, how, and why.

Purpose

Analysis of situations affected by the proliferation and misuse of small arms invariably reveals a very complex set of inter-related causes and consequences. This realisation may be overwhelming and make it difficult to know where to start. Problem and Solution Trees are a tool to help you to outline the problems that your society faces, their causes and consequences, and then to use this analysis as a basis for developing a positive response to the situation. They provide a way of representing complex issues more simply and identifying ways of addressing seemingly intractable problems.

Method

Allow approximately 45 minutes for this exercise. It is ideally done by a mixed group of 5–10 people. If greater numbers are involved, consider dividing participants into small groups, which will each report back at the end. To construct the problem tree:

1. State the problem as an issue to be addressed.
2. Identify the main causes of the problem; name them in boxes below the problem statement.
3. Identify the main consequences of the problem; name them in boxes above the problem statement.
Then begin the solution tree:

4. For every cause of the problem already identified, suggest a solution; write this (maybe using a post-it note or a sticker) over the cause.

5. Consider what would be different if these solutions were achieved: how would the consequences be transformed? Identify the new outcomes. Write these (on post-it notes or stickers) over the consequences.

6. Finally, using the information from the previous step, construct a new tree. Above the line identify the new outcomes; below it, write the solutions; and through the middle, restate the same problem/issue in terms of your vision for the future.

**Next step**

The next step is to use the solutions that you have identified as a basis for setting your goals, as outlined in Phase 2: Establishing Goals.

**Example of a Problem and Solution Tree: developing a small-arms campaign programme in Kosovo**

The following example was produced by members of the Forum for Civic Initiative (FIQ-FCI) in Ferizaj, Kosovo during a planning workshop in January 2003 to identify opportunities for developing a programme of action against the abuse of small arms.

In the first tree, one major problem faced by FIQ is described in the middle box: the fact that in Kosovo the proliferation and abuse of small arms is not a matter of public concern. This was the problem that FIQ decided to analyse in greater depth. They did so by listing some of the main causes of the problem below the statement, and listing the consequences above it.

Then the group reviewed the initial problem statement (‘Small arms is not a public issue’) and in the second tree they restated this problem in positive terms, expressed in the form of what they wanted to achieve: their vision (‘To make small arms a matter of public concern’). Then the group thought again about the causes of the problem already identified and considered how each in turn could be addressed and resolved. These solutions were added to the solutions tree below the vision statement. Finally, FIQ considered how, if these solutions were implemented, the outcomes would be different from those consequences identified in the problem analysis.

This process can be useful in developing a better understanding of a situation and beginning to think about possible solutions.
Figure 2.4: Problem and Solution Tree, produced by FIQ, Kosovo

**Problem tree**
- confusion and no clear target
- lack of action by government, public, and NGOs
- lack of media coverage
- gun crime and citizens’ insecurity
- health-care costs and other public costs
- lack of public investment
- high number of illicit small arms

**The problem: small arms is not a public issue**
- unclear responsibilities of UN mission and local government
- many other priorities
- insufficient legislation and/or implementation
- insecurity and lack of trust between citizens and institutions
- guns seen as a private issue
- lack of journalists with specialised knowledge

**Solution tree**
- improved legislation and border controls
- enhanced public and civil-society engagement on the issue
- better-quality coverage and information
- improved licensing regime, more licences issued
- reduction in gun crimes and accidents
- resources spent on health, justice, etc. reallocated

**The vision: to make small arms a matter of public concern**
- media events and round tables
- public education
- advocacy for legislation
- trust building
- surveys to map the problems
- public information to promote transparency
- training of journalists
Figure 2.5: Template for a Problem and Solution Tree

**Problem tree**

- consequence 1
- consequence 2
- consequence 3
- consequence 4

**Issue**

- cause 1
- cause 2
- cause 3
- etc

**Solution tree**

- outcome 1
- outcome 2
- outcome 3
- etc

**Vision**

- solution 1
- solution 2
- solution 3
- etc

Assessing the situation  Establishing goals  Developing a strategy  Planning the activity  Implementation and monitoring  Evaluation
Mapping solutions

You should aim to be very clear about the range of possible solutions available to you before you start to develop your programme of action. This will put you in a position where you can make informed judgements about the best ways to proceed, and the various levels at which you will need to act.

Key questions to address

At what levels does change need to happen?

- at the local level?
- at the national level?
- at the regional level?
- at the international level?

What kind of change do we want to achieve at these different levels?

- A change in institutional policy, for example a government introducing new legislation on the possession of arms by civilians?
- A change in institutional practice, for example the establishment of a community-based gun-amnesty scheme?
- A change in the attitudes and opinions that members of the public, or a particular group, hold about an issue, for example changing public opinion to support a ban on handguns?
- A change in the way that members of the public, or a particular group (for instance men or women) act, for example voluntary demobilisation of rebel forces?

Who needs to change at each of these levels?

Is it for instance...

- an institution (the police, for example)?
- an individual or group within an institution (for instance, the Chief of Police or local police station chiefs)?
- key individuals in society (for instance, opinion formers such as editors of popular media)?
- a social group or members of a social group within the wider public (for instance, young men living in a particular geographical area)?
- some or all of these?

These questions and their answers can be represented in a solutions table (see Planning Tool 2 opposite.
Planning Tool 2:
Solutions Table

One aspect of assessing the situation involves managing and categorising the information that you have gathered. A simple Solutions Table can help you to do this.

Context

In mapping possible solutions, there are likely to be a wide range of different individuals, groups, and institutions who may have roles to play. It is likely too that different problems, and different ways of dealing with these problems, will be apparent at local, national, regional, and international levels.

Purpose

A Solutions Table is simply a tool for storing and summarising complex information in a format which should make it easier to manage and to present the information to others. This should help you to decide at which levels and in which arenas it is most appropriate for you to be active.

Method

1. At each of the geographic levels relevant to your work,
   - summarise the main problems, their causes and consequences;
   - describe the kinds of change that you want to see;
   - specify who needs to change in order for these changes to be achieved.

2. Summarise this information in the Solutions Table.
The Working Group for Weapons Reduction (WGWR) has gradually gained a better understanding of the problem of the proliferation and abuse of small arms in Cambodia. The group identified the following issues as the main obstacles to weapons-reduction efforts in that country.

Table 2.2: Solutions Table: obstacles to change in Cambodia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are the problems and their causes and consequences?</th>
<th>At the local level</th>
<th>At the national level</th>
<th>At the regional and international levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The culture of violence is a legacy of decades of internal conflict. Although the fighting has ended, people continue to use weapons as the first solution to solve their problems. Even minor disputes often turn deadly. In local communities there is a serious lack of trust between civilians and the authorities responsible for maintaining security. Almost no dialogue takes place between civilians and local authorities on security and small-arms issues.</td>
<td>The creation of the National Commission for Weapons Reform and Management was a major step forward, but the Commission is not yet operational and it lacks the capacity, resources, and support needed to become effective.</td>
<td>Efforts by the government and the international community, supported by civil society, are now better resourced and timed, but they still lack a strong basis of understanding, and they are not comprehensive or well co-ordinated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What kind of change do you want to see?</th>
<th>At the local level</th>
<th>At the national level</th>
<th>At the regional and international levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue needs to be encouraged between these groups to help to ensure that disarmament efforts are accepted, sustainable, and effective, and address underlying root problems.</td>
<td>Unless the attitudes of civilians, security forces, and authorities are modified, the demand for weapons will still remain. To transform this dependence on weapons into skills for non-violent conflict resolution is important work, requiring long-term commitment.</td>
<td>Without a strategy to develop capable, resourced, and self-led Cambodian efforts, current activities will be of limited effectiveness. An internationally supported long-term strategic plan is needed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who needs to change?</th>
<th>At the local level</th>
<th>At the national level</th>
<th>At the regional and international levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• security forces • local authorities • civil society/civilian groups</td>
<td>• Police, armed forces, and other security forces must develop new policies and practices. • Individuals and groups must find ways to deal with their own fears and find common solutions to improve security.</td>
<td>Regionally and internationally, institutional support for the government is needed, to increase its understanding and capacity to carry out the work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Figure 2.6: Template for a Solutions Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At the local level</th>
<th>At the national level</th>
<th>At the regional and international levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the problems and their causes and consequences?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kind of change do you want to see?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who needs to change?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessing the situation  Establishing goals  Developing a strategy  Planning the activity  Implementation and monitoring  Evaluation
**Analysing your environment**

Thinking about your (internal) organisation and your (external) environment will help you to maximise your potential and avoid problems as you develop your plan. Considering how to use your particular experience and other strengths in order to respond to the main features of the environment enables you to choose approaches that have the best chance of success.

Analysing your environment involves considering two elements:

- **external factors**: the main political, social, and economic conditions that might affect your ability to make a contribution
- **internal factors**: your strengths, experience, resources, and contacts.

### External factors: key questions to address

The proliferation and misuse of small arms can have an enormous impact on political, social, and economic conditions. Arms proliferation is often used by states as a foreign-policy tool and is treated as an issue of national security. Even in countries where the State and civil society co-exist and co-operate, those in power may strongly resist the idea of discussing or providing information on small arms – let alone accepting civil society as a legitimate partner.

However, there will also be positive trends in society that are beneficial to your work, such as a government’s desire to be regarded as a key international player which has put its own house in order.

All kinds of environmental factors will affect your work. To help you to identify the most important of them, consider the following questions. (Some sources of information which may help you to answer them are listed in Part 4.)

*What political factors could have a critical influence on our work?*

*How do key institutions function?*

For instance:

- Are government and State institutions accessible to members of the public and civil society?
- Do regional, national, and local governments have significant decentralised authority?
- How do the military and police operate?
- Is the judicial system impartial?
- How much influence do international donors have on government policy?
- Who else outside the country has influence?
• Which institutions are likely to present opportunities for our work, and which are likely to present obstacles?

**What are the levels of public accountability?**

For instance:

• Which groups have power, and which are excluded?
• How (if at all) is policy change monitored and enforced?
• Does corruption play a significant role in how decisions are taken? At what levels?
• Do decision makers behave in an open and transparent way? How do they communicate their decisions to the public, if at all?
• Do we have access to information about decisions made?
• What is the basis (if any) on which decision makers are held accountable?
• What ways (if any) exist for making sure that decision makers are accountable?
• What kind of access are we likely to get to decision makers?

**What social factors might influence our work?**

For instance:

• Are the media wholly State-controlled? Are they allowed to be critical?
• How will we be portrayed by the media?
• How strong is civil-society organisation? How independent?
• Is civil society permitted to participate in political life?
• How are we, as representatives of civil society, likely to be viewed by the decision makers whom we may wish to influence?
• Who is likely to support or oppose us?
• How are electronic communications used and viewed in society?

**What economic factors might influence our work?**

For instance:

• How much does a gun cost on the black market?
• How do small arms affect local and national economies? What are the economic benefits? What are the costs?
• How does conflict affect people’s access to resources?
• How does the overall state of the economy affect our ability to operate?
• What relationship, if any, does the government have with donor countries?
• What economic alternatives are there?
**Internal factors: key questions to address**

**Does our organisation have legitimacy?**

For instance:

- For whom does our organisation speak?
- Who will accept our right to speak out on the abuse of small arms?
- Who questions our legitimacy? Why?
- How can we increase our legitimacy?

**Does our organisation have credibility?**

For instance:

- What ways do we use to communicate?
- How reliable is the information that our group provides to the public?
- Are our organisation’s leaders seen as trustworthy and knowledgeable?
- How can we increase our credibility?

**Is our organisation accountable?**

For instance:

- Who makes decisions in our organisation or coalition?
- How open is the decision-making process?
- To whom are decision makers within the coalition accountable?
- How are they held accountable?
- How are members informed and involved?
- How do we communicate our progress to others outside the organisation?
- How can we improve our accountability?

**Is our organisation prepared?**

For instance:

- What past experience do we have that will be most relevant to the present situation?
- Do we have access to the research that we need to make our case convincingly?
- Have we considered and prepared for possible risks (physical, legal, etc.) to the security of our organisation?
- Have we considered and taken into account the gender-related aspects of our work?
- Have we identified the key stakeholders in the issue?
- What do we need to do to improve our preparedness?
For more on security and risk issues, see Section 2 in Part 3 of the Handbook.
For more on research, see Section 3 in Part 3.

Is our organisation well placed to work with others?

For instance:

- What are our previous experiences of working with others?
- Which have been our best partnerships, and why?
- What can we learn from these experiences to ensure that future relationships are more successful?

For more on working with others, see Section 1 in Part 3.

Does our organisation have sufficient resources?

For instance:

- Do we have the physical resources that we need?
- Do we have the right people with the right experience and skills?
- Are our people and other resources deployed in the best way?
- How could we better match our resources and our programmes?

Does our organisation have secure funding?

For instance:

- Are there good systems of financial control within the organisation?
- Do we expect significant changes in our expenditure over the next two–three years?
- Can we predict how our sources of income will develop over the next two–three years?
- Are we getting money from a wide range of donors and funders?
- What are the financial priorities for our organisation, and do we have plans to meet them?
- What measures can we take to improve the security of funding?

For more on funding, see Section 4 in Part 3.
Planning Tool 3: SWOT Analysis

One aspect of assessing a situation involves analysing the environment. A SWOT analysis – assessing your organisation’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats – can be used to help you to do this.

Context

To be effective, usually it is vital to base your programme of work on a realistic assessment of what is possible and where your intervention is likely to be most successful. This depends to a large extent on being able to match your internal capacities with the external situation. See below for a good example of a SWOT analysis that was developed as a means of understanding a real situation, constructed by South Asian NGOs.

Purpose

Conducting a SWOT analysis can help you to develop an overall sense of the main factors – both internal and external – that will have an influence on your work. The format of the SWOT analysis should help you to identify, discuss, and manage some of the issues that face your organisation.

Method

A SWOT analysis organises information by breaking it down into the following categories:

- **strengths (internal)**: the positive aspects of your organisation;
- **weaknesses (internal)**: the factors within your organisation that might inhibit your work;
- **opportunities (external)**: the factors in society that could positively affect your work;
- **threats (external)**: the factors in society that could have a negative impact on your work.

Conducting a SWOT analysis involves identifying the major factors and issues affecting your work in each of these categories. You can do this either in a 10–15
minute exercise (using the Golden Rules of Brainstorming on page 67); or as a final activity, summarising a more detailed background analysis (based perhaps on the questions outlined in the section on analysing your environment, pp. 80–81).

Once you have captured the information, you should use it to consider the following:

- how you can counter or minimise your weaknesses and the threats you face;
- how you can maximise your strengths and exploit your opportunities.

**Notes**

Your SWOT analysis should prove to be a useful tool throughout your planning. You should find it helpful to refer to as you develop your plans; use it to check that the programme you are planning is realistic and makes sense, given the situation as it really is.

**Example of a SWOT analysis: the South Asia Small Arms Network**

The following is an abbreviated example of a SWOT analysis. It was produced by representatives of civil society across South Asia in February 2003 to identify the problems, challenges, and opportunities related to their work on the abuse of small arms in the region. The planning group used this tool during a meeting to identify priorities for regional action to be taken by the South Asia Small Arms Network. The group was keen to analyse the external environment, but to do so in the context of a detailed understanding of the range of skills, experiences, and resources that network members could contribute.

As in this example, a SWOT analysis sometimes produces generalities which could apply to many similar situations, and sometimes it produces more specific points that make it possible to make strategic choices about priorities.
**Figure 2.7: SWOT analysis – South Asia Small Arms Network**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths (internal)</th>
<th>Weaknesses (internal)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Existing SASA-Net members and others</td>
<td>• Lack of strategy to push for changes in governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Growing civil-society movement</td>
<td>• Network needs to expand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Women’s groups are involved</td>
<td>• Lack of precise and accurate research/data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good work on the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons</td>
<td>• Need to engage young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Passion and commitment of members</td>
<td>• Little dialogue between government and civil society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Connection at the community level</td>
<td>• Lack of human stories — need to highlight the personal impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Other activist communities who can/should work on small arms and light weapons</td>
<td>• Very limited resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work on small arms and light weapons provides the agenda for peace</td>
<td>• Media not engaged by civil society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some existing research – i.e. on legislation in South Asia</td>
<td>• No dialogue between civil-society stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• International context/IANSA</td>
<td>• No campaign materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities (external)</th>
<th>Threats (external)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Anti-war in Iraq movement</td>
<td>• Strength of the arms lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• International organisations</td>
<td>• Civil-society impact has weakened since September 11th 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Peace process in Sri Lanka</td>
<td>• Civil society is not mobilised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interest from police in training</td>
<td>• Weapons not collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Millions of civilians are opposed to the abuse of small</td>
<td>• Inadequate governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arms</td>
<td>• SAARC not functioning as well as hoped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opportunity to mobilise against bad governance</td>
<td>• Public opinion not mobilised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• National commission in Sri Lanka</td>
<td>• Macro problems of poverty and globalisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• People understand the issue as important</td>
<td>• Threat to marginalised communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support from donors, including CIDA</td>
<td>• Non-cooperation by national governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some parts of South Asia Association for Regional</td>
<td>• Lack of commitment and political will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation (SAARC) work — i.e. technical committees</td>
<td>• Poor certification of weapons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SAARC is doing monitoring work which is transferable</td>
<td>• Lack of transparency on production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• War Against Terror</td>
<td>• Government legislation not implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Changing attitudes of some sections of the army</td>
<td>• India/Pakistan conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Programme of Action</td>
<td>• Increase in exports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Include non-violence in curriculum</td>
<td>• Easy availability of SALW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Connect SALW themes to other issues</td>
<td>• Arming of ethnic groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Afghanistan case study</td>
<td>• Hypocrisy of supplier countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on human rights and development as well as</td>
<td>• Media not engaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technical aspects</td>
<td>• Lack of understanding of the UN Programme of Action — lack of clear messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• People are tired of conflicts</td>
<td>• The amount of money in the SALW market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The time is right for action</td>
<td>• Deterioration of money in South Asia market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• UN Review Conference</td>
<td>• Lack of DDR – Demobilisation, Disarmament, and Reintegration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engage existing diplomacy efforts</td>
<td>• Impact on human rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Illicit production</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HANDOUT
**Figure 2.8: Template for a SWOT analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the positive aspects within our organisation that could be important in our work?</td>
<td>What are the factors within our organisation that might inhibit our work?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the factors in society (external to our organisation) that could positively affect our work?</td>
<td>What are the factors in society (external to our organisation) that could have a negative impact on our work?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessing the situation: summary and conclusion

In this section of the handbook we have argued that the first phase in designing, developing, and planning an effective programme of action requires time to be spent on an assessment of the situation in which one is working. Essentially this involves asking two fundamental questions:

- What are the problems that we face, and what are their possible solutions?
- What are the factors in our environment that may help or hinder our work?

This section introduced three tools designed to help you to focus and organise your analysis during this phase of planning:

- Problem and Solution Tree
- Solutions Table
- SWOT Analysis

Once you have a good understanding of the situation that you are in, you should be in a much better position to consider the changes that you can achieve. The next section suggests methods to help you to establish clear goals.
Phase 2: Establishing goals

Introduction

This phase involves the following steps:

- Prioritising solutions
- Setting goals

Having assessed the environment in which you plan to act, and having reached a clear and common judgement of the situation you are facing, you are in a much better position to identify and make clear what you are trying to achieve.

This phase in the process is important: it will enable you to use limited resources most effectively, for two reasons:

- Prioritising solutions is the first step towards making sure that what you seek to achieve is manageable, realistic, relevant to the context of the external environment, and commensurate with your own ability to respond to it.
- Being clear about your goal should give clarity to your whole programme of work, by sharpening the focus and helping you to think through how the change that you seek will actually happen.

Once you have considered these questions, you will be well placed to consider how you intend to achieve the goal that you have defined.

Prioritising solutions

If you have previously developed a Problem and Solution Tree (see Phase 1), you will probably have identified a number of different solutions that address the problems you are facing. However, given the limited availability of resources, you will probably want to focus your efforts on a specific solution, rather than trying to address everything.

Concentrating on a single solution can help you to achieve change and target your resources; but it can also distract attention from wider problems or deeper causes. Don’t forget that your work on a specific issue should be a step towards the wider vision of a world free of the scourge of small arms, as expressed, for example, in the Nairobi Declaration (see page 51 of Part 1 of this manual).
Key questions to address

Using the answers to the following questions, you should be able to identify the most appropriate solution for your situation. You are then in a position to determine what you hope to achieve.

Think about this in the context of the external political, economic, and social environment and in terms of your organisational capacity. If you have conducted a SWOT analysis (see Planning Tool 3 in Phase 1), you have already developed an excellent understanding of the context in which you plan to act.

For each potential solution, consider the following questions.

What is the potential impact?

- How significant would be the impact on the lives of affected individuals and communities if the solution were adopted?
- Who would benefit and who would not?

What are the prospects of success?

- Is it realistic to assume that some kind of change will actually occur?
- Will we be able to maintain action throughout the timeframe of likely change?
- Is it likely that there could be changes that do not achieve our proposed solution but still would benefit affected individuals and communities?
- Who will oppose us, and how powerful will their opposition be?

What is the internal rationale for our organisation to work on this issue now?

- Does working on this issue fit with our organisational values, mission, and mandate?
- Does it play to our strengths and minimise our weaknesses?
- Do we have sufficient resources? How might it affect future funding?
- How might it affect important relationships?
- Do our efforts complement the programme of a wider movement?
- What additional benefits does our organisation bring by getting involved on this issue?

What is the external rationale for our organisation to work on this issue now?

- Does working on the issue respond to specific opportunities?
- Can we minimise the impact of any threats?
- What are the security implications? What other risks are there? Are they manageable?
- Does it help to link local and global concerns?
- Can we picture a sequence of achievable steps that will lead to our proposed solution?
Planning Tool 4: Ranking Solutions

A ranking exercise can help you to establish your goals (the second phase in the planning process).

Context

Although it is tempting to try to address all the problems that you face, in practice you are likely to be more successful and effective if you focus your efforts on achieving change in particular areas.

Purpose

Deciding where to focus your efforts is vital, and it is worth investing effort to make the right decision. A poor choice of focus at this stage can damage your ability to achieve change. One useful tool in helping you to make a decision is a ranking exercise. It enables you to make direct comparisons between various options against a standard set of key criteria.

Method

This ranking exercise is based on a simple scoring technique:

1. List the range of options that you have identified as possible solutions.
2. For each possible solution in turn, consider how well it scores against four criteria:
   - potential impact
   - prospects of success
   - internal rationale
   - external rationale
3. Give each solution a score between 1 and 5 against each criteria, where 1 is a very weak match, and 5 is a very strong match.
4. Add up the scores and use the totals as a basis for reaching a decision about where to focus your efforts.
Notes

You should base your assessments on earlier analysis that you have conducted (e.g. your SWOT analysis).

In making your final choice, use the total score as a guide to inform group discussion, in order to reach a consensus. If different solutions have similar scores, consider which criteria are the most important: for example, is the likelihood of success the most important consideration for the group, or is potential impact more crucial?

Building on their analysis of the problem and possible solutions (as summarised on page 74), Kosovan NGO FIQ considered each of the solutions and did a quick ranking exercise, scoring each of the potential solutions against the criteria, as described. This proved to be a helpful tool in developing FIQ’s programme, because it was a simple and quick way of comparing the various available options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible solutions</th>
<th>Potential impact</th>
<th>Prospect of success</th>
<th>Internal rationale</th>
<th>External rationale</th>
<th>Total score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training of journalists</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducting survey</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building trust</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency: public information</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy for legislation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media events and round tables</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drawing on a combination of this exercise and earlier analysis of their external and internal situations, FIQ decided to focus their efforts on conducting a public survey to gauge people’s attitudes to the problem of the proliferation of small arms.
Figure 2.9: Template for Ranking Solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible solutions</th>
<th>Potential impact</th>
<th>Prospect of success</th>
<th>Internal rationale</th>
<th>External rationale</th>
<th>TOTAL SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Setting goals

Setting goals sounds deceptively simple. In practice, being clear about what you are trying to achieve can be the most difficult part of the whole planning process. It is also the most important. The clearer you can be about what you are trying to achieve, the easier it will be to identify the best ways of achieving it. If you are not clear about your goals, it will be difficult to communicate them to others.

Once you have decided which issue to work on, and have proposed the solution(s), you should decide on your goals. You can then keep reconsidering them, trying to make them more clear and more specific as your plans take shape.

Key questions to address

To set your goals, you need to ask two crucial questions:

What kind of change are we seeking?

You may find it helpful to review any earlier analysis that you conducted, examining the range of solutions to the problem (for instance by looking back at the earlier guidelines on mapping solutions).

At this stage you should aim to define the change in relation to one of the following:

- institutional policy
- institutional practice
- individuals\' attitudes and opinions
- individuals\' actions.

Who needs to change?

To answer this question, you need to identify the target. The target is the decision maker, the individual (or group) with the power to make the change that you are seeking. They may be one of the following, for example:

- the government minister responsible for the import and export of arms;
- a community leader or elder responsible for bringing security and stability to a local region;
- the head of the institution responsible for funding and implementing weapons-surrender programmes;
- the commissioner of police.

When setting your goal,

- Be as exact as possible. Specify which institution, what policy, which individuals, etc., need to change, and state as precisely as possible what kind of change is needed.
Focus on the ultimate change that you are trying to achieve, the change that will have an impact on people’s lives. It is very important to be clear about this. Do not focus on the means that you will adopt to achieve your end – for instance, the number of seminars you will organise, or the number of posters that you will produce – but focus on the end itself, the change that you want to see in the lives of those affected by the problems that you seek to address.

Getting this right is the foundation upon which your programme of action will be built.

**Establishing goals: summary and conclusion**

In this section of the handbook we have argued that, once you have assessed your situation, you are in a position to define your goals. Essentially this involves two steps:

- prioritising solutions so that you can focus your programme of action;
- clarifying the change that you are seeking, and identifying the people who need to change in order to achieve it.

This section introduced one tool designed to help you to focus and organise your analysis during this phase of planning:

- Ranking Solutions

Once you have defined your goals, you should be well placed to develop a strategy which helps you to make the most effective use of the opportunities available to you. The next section describes methods that may help you to think about means to make the change happen.
Phase 3: Developing a strategy

Introduction

This phase of the planning process consists of the following three steps:

- Framing the issue
- Identifying and categorising stakeholders
- Devising an influencing strategy

Once you have established your goal and considered its main implications – in particular through identifying who must change, and how – you can then think about the best ways to make this change happen.

This stage in the process is important in enabling you to use limited resources most effectively, for the following reasons:

- Unless you understand the forces for and against change, you may not be in a position to decide how best to act to obtain the change that you desire.
- It is an opportunity to think strategically about the best means available to you to influence your target. This will enable you to focus only on what is likely to be effective, and to avoid wasting time on approaches that have little chance of success.

Once you have considered these questions, you will have all the tools in place to be able to develop your plan of action.

Framing the issue

The experience of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) provides one very valuable lesson: that strong and clear messages are crucial to the success of campaigning and popular advocacy. When you are developing your campaigning plans, remember that a bold call for definitive standards, rather than looking for consensus and universal support, has been shown to be an important and successful way of engaging and motivating supporters.

Being very clear about what you want to change and what you want your audience to do to achieve the change is important as a means of communicating the purpose of your action. It also provides the imperative for the audience to take action.
In the case of the ICBL, the development of this strong message entailed a ‘re-framing’ of the issue, turning the banning of landmines into a humanitarian objective, rather than a military issue about arms control. This re-framing provided a different focus to the issue and opened it up to new groups of potential supporters. Talking about the issue in terms of human suffering – ‘the human cost of war’ – also had the advantage of playing to the strengths of civil-society organisations (who understood the realities of that suffering) and the weaknesses of their opponents (who tended to be more focused on the theory of warfare).
Planning Tool 5: Framing the Issue

Framing the issue can be an important and useful step in developing your strategy.

Context

Once you have established your goal, it is a good time to consider how you will communicate about the issues that you will be focusing on, to both internal and external audiences.

Purpose

A proposition statement that frames the issue can be used as a basis for building support for your work, both internally and externally. The process of developing the statement can be a good way of reaching consensus about the essential core of your work and communicating this to existing and potential supporters. A proposition statement is an encapsulation of the problem, your position, your proposed solution, and the action that you want taken.

Table 2.4: How to frame your issue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A short summary of the PROBLEM</th>
<th>A brief outline of your POSITION</th>
<th>Your suggested SOLUTION</th>
<th>The ACTION that you want to be taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In stating the problem, you should try to focus on the core problem and describe how people are affected by the situation.</td>
<td>In other words, what is your response to the problem? Include an explanation of why you hold this view, if possible briefly referring to any research or other evidence that supports your thinking.</td>
<td>As outlined in the section on Setting Goals, your solution is likely to involve one or more of the following: • institutional policy change • changes in institutional practice • changes in individuals' attitudes and opinions • changes in the way that individuals act. Be as specific as possible.</td>
<td>In describing the action that you are calling for, you should try to identify all the relevant audiences and what you hope that each can contribute.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Method

1. First, brainstorm some answers to the four central questions:
   - What is the problem?
   - What is your position?
   - What is your solution?
   - What is the action that you want to be taken?

   If you have done some of the earlier exercises, you will already have covered much of this ground, so now you may simply need to review and check your earlier thinking.

2. Next, for each column, amalgamate the results of the brainstorm, in order to reach agreement about the central message that you wish to communicate.

3. Finally, turn what you want to say into four sentences, one for each of the four columns. These sentences combined should frame your issue in one paragraph.

Notes

Being very clear about what you want to change and what you want your audience to do to achieve the change is very important in helping you to think about how best to proceed. It can also be surprisingly difficult: it may reveal previously unrealised differences of opinion among the participants.
Figure 2.10: Template for framing an issue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the problem?</th>
<th>What is our position?</th>
<th>What is our solution?</th>
<th>What is the action that we want?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Identifying stakeholders

All kinds of relationships will affect your work. There will be a variety of individuals and institutions, or ‘stakeholders’, whose interests include aspects of the problem of small arms that are relevant to your own priorities. The term stakeholder includes any individual or organisation who is either interested in or directly affected by the position that you take on a particular issue.

Work to end the abuse of small arms invariably involves a call for change. Some people, often very powerful, benefit from the current situation and may be opposed to any change. Your organisation, however well supported and effective, is sure to have limited resources, which will probably be much smaller than those of your opponents. Therefore it is crucial to identify the opponents of change and your potential allies.

If, for example, you aim to improve local community policing in the area where you live, you will need to work out who supports your position and who opposes it. You can do this by considering the attitudes of the people and groups who are interested in or affected by your position, such as local police officers, local government officials, victims of crime, and those who currently benefit from the status quo. It is beneficial too to consider the importance of the issue to them, as well as the influence that they wield.
### Figure 2.11: Identifying stakeholders and finding out more about them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You need to research:</th>
<th>How to find out more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which government departments are responsible for:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• import and export of arms</td>
<td>• Does your government produce a directory?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• negotiations and participating in international/regional forums</td>
<td>• Does it have a website outlining what different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• law enforcement and border controls</td>
<td>departments do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• national defence and military policy</td>
<td>• Are there other civil-society organisations working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• regulation of civilian possession of firearms</td>
<td>with governments who could give you the information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• finance</td>
<td>• Are UN agencies operating in your country or region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• development and grant making</td>
<td>(UNDP, UNICEF, Department of Peacekeeping Operations,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• provincial and local government</td>
<td>etc.) from whom you could obtain information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Can you get the information from local government or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>community leaders?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Which other organisations and individuals have a major interest in your issue?

- NGOs
- community groups
- media
- political parties
- members of parliament
- police
- business
- labour organisations
- women’s groups
- youth groups
- religious groups
- academics
- elders and community leaders
- judiciary

- Ask IANSA (www.iansa.org) if other local NGOs are working on small-arms issues.
- Have any political parties produced statements on small-arms abuse?
- Are there public records of parliamentary debates, or is there public access to parliamentary sessions?

### Which international players have an interest in your issue?

- donors
- NGOs
- UN bodies
- Regional groups (e.g. Organisation of American States, EU, etc.)
- Transnational corporations involved in arms industry
- Trade unions
- International financial institutions
- IANSA
- Other governments that are working to introduce new policies on the proliferation of small arms

### Do any big international NGOs that work to counteract the abuse of small arms have country or regional offices close to where you work? Try

- Oxfam GB
- World Council of Churches
- Amnesty International
- International Committee of the Red Cross/Red Crescent.

Contact the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs for access to reports and work on small arms within the UN system, plus statements, positions, and voting records of member states. (Contact details for these and many other organisations are given in Part 4 of this book.)
Categorising stakeholders

When identifying potential allies and opponents, it is first important to make sure that you have identified the widest possible group. To begin, take a blank piece of paper and have a brainstorm to name all stakeholders. At this stage, do not try to analyse them. Make sure that you name them explicitly: for example, ‘business’ will not help your analysis; instead, name actual companies with a direct interest in your issue, and state what they do. After this, you should try to focus on the most important stakeholders, through a process of categorisation.

Categorising stakeholders will help you to understand their current position on the issue. This will help you to decide how you might relate to them, now and in the future. One way to categorise stakeholders is to group them under the following four headings.

1. **The target:** Your target is the decision maker – the individual or group with the power to make the change that you are seeking. See below for advice on devising an influencing strategy.

2. **Beneficiaries:** These are the people whose lives you hope will be improved by the successful achievement of your goals. (See Phase 6 on evaluation for advice on how to assess the impact on beneficiaries.)

3. **Opponents:** Those who oppose what you are trying to do. Some could become allies in time, when they have understood the issues, or they could stand in the way of what you’re trying to do, in which case they may become targets. Opponents may include, for example:
   - the government department or minister responsible for the promotion of arms sales
   - arms manufacturers
   - armed criminal groups
   - warlords or rebel leaders fighting for territory or access to resources
   - non-State actors who have opted for the use of violence as a policy.

**Identifying likely opponents: key questions to address**

*What are the blocks to change?*

- what entrenched ideologies?
- what vested interests?
- what structural barriers?
- what social exclusions?
- what information restrictions?
Who benefits from the current situation?

- Who benefits economically (e.g. gun runners, manufacturers, etc.)?
- Who benefits politically (either within government, or others whose power depends on small arms)?
- Who is likely to actively oppose us?
- What motivates them to oppose us?
- How powerful are they?

4 Allies: People and organisations who support you because they share your values, or they will benefit either directly or indirectly from the changes that you are trying to bring about. They may include, for example:

- religious leaders
- community leaders
- sympathetic journalists
- politicians or political parties
- funders (see Section 4 on securing funding in Part 3 of the handbook).

**Identifying likely allies: key questions to address**

Who is losing from or disadvantaged by the current situation?

Who else might want to see the situation change?

How powerful are they?

Why should we work with them?

How could we work with them?

See Section 1 on working together in Part 3 of the handbook.
Planning Tool 6: Force-field analysis

A force-field analysis is a useful tool to help you to think about developing a strategy.

Context

You are not working in isolation. It is important to consider the other key players, or stakeholders, who have an interest in what you are doing, whose actions or attitudes may affect your ability to achieve change.

Purpose

A forcefield analysis can be a useful tool for understanding the power of your allies and opponents over the issue that is of concern to you. It is a good visual technique for representing the relative strengths of the supporters of change and the opponents who are likely to try to prevent that change from happening. It can form a basis for deciding the kinds of strategy that you will adopt to increase the pressure for change and minimise resistance. It is an important tool for helping you to identify where you might best focus your efforts to achieve these ends.

Method

Forces acting in two directions can be represented in terms of supporters for change and opponents resisting change.

1. Take a sheet of paper and, using the template provided below, briefly describe the current situation in the box in the middle of the page.

2. On a separate piece of paper, brainstorm a list of all the supporters of change.

3. Then consider each in turn, deciding on their relative importance.

4. Represent each force for change as an arrow. Each arrow should be labelled; the size of the arrows should represent the relative strengths of the various individual forces.

5. Once you have identified the forces for change, you may also identify potential assets that are not being put to use in support of change.
6  Now brainstorm a list of all those resisting change.
7  Then consider each in turn, deciding on their relative power/strength.
8  Represent each force for change as an arrow. Each arrow should be labelled; the size of the arrows should represent the relative strengths of the various individual forces.

The force-field shows that if the forces are equal, the situation will remain unchanged. To effect change, you must either increase the power of your allies, or neutralise or reduce the power and influence of your opponents.

**Notes**

You should base your assessments on analysis that you have previously conducted (for example, your SWOT analysis).

In many circumstances, it is easier to reduce the restraining force than to try to increase the supporting forces.
**Example**

Figure 2.12 represents an example of a force-field analysis constructed by representatives of civil society from across Eastern Africa in Nairobi, Kenya in November 2002, during a workshop exercise to identify ways forward in tackling some of the key small-arms issues affecting the region.

**Figure 2.12: Potential allies and opponents of change in East Africa**

This analysis indicated to participants that the forces for change (the allies) had the potential to outweigh those opposed to it. However, they identified two major forces opposing change (manufacturers and criminals) whose influence had to be reduced to enhance chances of success. Similarly, several forces for change, including National Focal Points, NGOs, and international agencies, were identified as allies who needed to be supported to enhance their influence.
**Figure 2.13: Template for a force-field analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allies, potential allies, and forces for change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(each represented as an arrow, with the size of the arrow indicating its relative importance)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opponents and restraining forces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(each represented as an arrow, with the size of the arrow indicating its relative importance)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Devising an influencing strategy

Influencing your target – or decision maker – should be at the heart of your programme. As the force-field analysis shows, there will be many ways for you to exercise influence; sometimes you can do it directly, sometimes indirectly. Usually a combination of approaches works best. Your tactics should not operate as a series of isolated activities. That is why it is important to define your overall influencing strategy first.

Key questions to address

Who or what is the target?

The target is the decision maker – that is, the individual or group with the power to make the change that you are seeking. (You may have already addressed this question if you have considered the questions in Phase 2: Establishing Goals.) This is often much more difficult to determine than you might at first imagine – so make sure that you allow enough time to think this through carefully.

What is the target’s current stance on the issue?

For political targets, consider the following:

- public statements and transcripts of speeches
- policy positions
- political ideology
- manifestos
- voting records on relevant issues
- response in debates
- response to your own correspondence.

If your target is a particular group:

- market research can be used to assess the current status of a certain group’s knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours (and to track any changes over time);
- more informally, examples of what they say, write, or do should be gathered and recorded.

What would influence them on this issue?

As your own force-field analysis is likely to show, you may seek to influence the target directly, but there may be other, indirect routes that you could use in addition. These indirect routes are the channels of influence: the people and institutions that may influence the target on your behalf.
One way of building on your force-field analysis is to consider the forces for change in greater detail and prioritise the channels that you want to exploit. During the force-field analysis, it is likely that you have identified all the main routes (or channels) that are available to you to bring influence to bear on the decision maker; and those routes that you consider are likely to be the most influential (those with the biggest arrows).

To help you to decide which channels to prioritise, one additional question to consider is whether you have a good chance of persuading them to take action on your behalf.

A matrix of channels of influence can help you to analyse the range of routes available to you. It is based on an analysis of the quality of the two relationships involved in this influencing process – between you and the channel, and between the channel and the target.

When you have constructed a matrix, you will be able to draw up an influence map. This will help you to build up a picture of the routes that you will take to reach your decision maker.
Planning Tool 7:
Matrix of Channels of Influence

A Channels of Influence Matrix can help you to develop your strategy.

**Context**

Having established your goal, you need to develop a strategy to achieve it. The most important element of this strategy will be identifying the means (or channels) that you will use to influence your target.

**Purpose**

In any situation, it is likely that there will be a range of channels open to you to influence your target. The trick is to identify the best ones, and then to focus your efforts on the most effective means available.

By considering the quality of the two relationships involved in this influencing process – between you and the channel and between the channel and the target – you will be able to make an appropriate selection of which channels to concentrate on.

**Method**

Using the template for a Channels of Influence Matrix:

1. Brainstorm a list of the channels of influence available to you.
2. Give each channel a score (high, medium, or low) to denote its likely effectiveness for influencing the target.
3. Give each channel a score (high, medium, or low) to denote your own likely effectiveness in influencing that channel.
4. Plot the results on the channels matrix.
5. Use these findings to prioritise channels and to develop tactics for achieving your goal.
**Notes**

Remember to think about informal influencing channels and opportunities as well as formal channels. For instance, is the President’s wife interested in small-arms issues? Is the Police Chief likely to respond positively to a favourable opinion voiced by a close friend whom one of your members may know well?

![Figure 2.14: Template for a channels of influence matrix](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How effectively will you be able to influence the channel?</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How much influence will the channel have with your target?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>High</td>
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<td>Med</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Low</td>
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</table>
Planning Tool 8:
Influence Map

This technique complements and develops the previous tool: the Channels of Influence Matrix. It will help you to devise your influencing strategy.

**Context**

An Influence Map gives shape to your strategy and establishes the framework for your plan of action.

**Purpose**

An Influence Map is a tool that you might use in developing, presenting, and explaining your influencing strategy. It provides a simple visual guide to the routes that you will be taking in order to influence your target.

**Method**

Starting with a blank sheet of paper:

1. Place the target at the centre.
2. Around the target, write the main channels of influence that you will be using.
3. Identify any secondary channels that you plan to use. These are people or groups of people who can influence your main channels.
4. Use arrows to represent the influencing relationships.

See the example below.
**Example: The Slovak NGOs Working Group**

The Slovak NGOs Working Group on arms aims to increase the transparency of arms-trade issues and to strengthen the case for the introduction of greater parliamentary scrutiny of the national arms-export control system in the Slovak Republic, in line with EU standards. One aspect of this work has been to seek to persuade the Slovak government to publish an official Annual Report on Strategic Export Controls.

To achieve this goal, the Working Group’s strategy of influence has been to focus on six priority channels:

- NGO representatives
- independent specialists and academics from research institutes
- parliamentarians
- the media
- government officials
- defence-industry representatives.

These are the primary channels, because they can exert influence directly on the target.

In addition, there will be secondary channels who can bring influence to bear, indirectly, through others. These secondary channels may be in a good position to influence the primary channels to advocate on their behalf. Often, as in this case, the same influence routes can be used in different ways. For example, the media might be a primary channel, directly influencing the government. But they are also a secondary channel to influence others, such as parliamentarians and defence-industry representatives, to raise the issue directly with the relevant minister.

Figure 2.15 is a simplified representation of the routes of influence identified during the Slovak campaign. For a more detailed explanation of the strategy developed by the Slovak NGOs Working Group, see the case study on pp. 120–121.
Figure 2.15: An influence map produced by the Slovak NGOs Working Group

TARGET: MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

- NGOs
- defence-industry representatives
- senior officials in other ministries
- EU
- international partners
- media
- NGOs
- academics
- parliamentarians
- international partners
- media
- NGOs
- academics
- media
- NGOs
- academics

HANDOUT

Assessing the situation  Establishing goals  Developing a strategy  Planning the activity  Implementation and monitoring  Evaluation
Developing a strategy: summary and conclusion

In this section of the handbook we have argued that, having established your goal, you should consider the best ways to achieve the desired change(s). Essentially this involves:

- understanding and assessing the supporters and opponents of change;
- considering ways of influencing the target, and selecting those that are likely to be most effective.

This section introduced four tools designed to help you to focus and organise your analysis during this phase of planning:

- Framing the Issue
- Force-field Analysis
- Matrix of Channels of Influence
- Influence Map

Once you have developed your influencing strategy, you are well placed to create your action plan.
**Phase 4: Planning the activity**

**Introduction**

This phase of the planning process involves the following steps:

- Setting objectives
- Developing an action plan

Having identified the means by which you can best influence your target, you need to decide on the details of your action plan. This phase in the process will enable you to use limited resources most effectively in the following ways.

- Setting clear objectives will lay out the steps between where you are now and where you want to be in the future, helping you to plot a clear pathway to your goal.
- Thinking through the actions that you will undertake helps you to determine how activities, resources, and objectives fit together.
- Action planning gives you a final chance to review whether you have been realistic in your assessment of what is possible.
- A detailed plan helps everyone involved to be clear about what they should do, in what time-frame, and why.
- Objectives and plans give you something against which to measure your progress, so that if you are heading in the wrong direction it will be obvious before it is too late.

Once you have planned your actions, you will be ready to implement your plan.

**Setting objectives**

Having established your influencing strategy, you will need to plan your approach in greater detail. At this stage, the clearer you can be about your objectives, the easier it will be for you to focus all your resources and energy on achieving them. Planning can be time-consuming, but good planning will prevent you wasting time later; it will give you a clearer purpose and a well-developed scheme of activities for achieving it. Planning helps you to clarify whom to target, when, and how. You will be in control of events and better prepared for action, and your activities will be more coherent and co-ordinated.
Key questions to address

You should have already established your goal (see Phase 2). A vital part of the planning process is to set (short-term) objectives which identify some of the steps on the way to achieving your ultimate (long-term) goal.

Achieving effective change on small-arms abuse is often a long-term process, so it is important to quantify your progress. Setting short-term objectives should help to maintain your motivation and demonstrate to your supporters and funders that your work is making progress.

Are we clear about the pathway to change?

You need to understand how individual elements of the situation fit together.

- How will changes in institutions lead to an improvement in the lives of affected individuals and communities?
- What degree of influence does the public have on key institutions?
- How far are you able to effect changes among the public?

Changes in institutions: Meaningful change occurs in institutions when there are changes in institutional policy and institutional practice. In most cases, policy-change is a means to an end. The subsequent changes in institutional practice are the key factors that lead to improved conditions for affected communities and individuals. In other words, a changed policy benefits people only if the policy is actually applied.

Organisations advocating change often concentrate on getting policy changed, but then they fail to monitor the change to make sure that it is being enforced. However, there often remains a gap between stated policy and actual practice, for a number of reasons, such as a lack of political will (because of competing priorities or corruption, for example), or a lack of institutional capacity to implement the new policy (because of limited resources or weak systems). Or the new policy is implemented in ways that were not expected when the policy was drawn up.

In addition, policy reform can be altered or reversed at any time. For example, in West Africa, the ECOWAS moratorium (see page 52 for details) contained many practical measures to curb the proliferation and misuse of small arms in the region. However, the actual benefits of the moratorium have so far proved limited, because change in policy has not led to changes in the behaviour of certain key governments. This is also the case with several international non-binding agreements. Strong organisation at both national and grassroots levels is likely to be needed in order to put pressure on governments and other authorities, and to push for greater access to information and greater levels of political accountability.
Changes among public groups: Meaningful change among individuals and groups occurs when there are changes in attitudes and behaviour. Changing people’s attitudes and behaviour is not simple. Giving people new knowledge about an issue will not automatically lead them to change their attitudes (although it may be one of the contributing factors). Likewise, the development of new attitudes or beliefs will not automatically lead to changes in behaviour (although it is probably a vital stage in the process of behaviour change).

Public-change objectives may be focused either on individuals or on groups of individuals. For example, you could target police officers, or men who exhibit certain types of behaviour, or members of parliament. You should define these groups as precisely as possible.

The influence of the public on institutions: In some cases, institutions may change their policies and practices as a result of public action or public opinion on an issue. However, in some cases, what tends to influence political élites is the attitude and influence of other élites, not the opinion of the general public. It may make more sense to focus on the most important institutions, rather than seeking to raise awareness among – or influence the behaviour of – public audiences.

How will we know whether we are making progress towards our goal?

Objectives are intermediate steps that you need to take on the way to your ultimate goal. They provide a means for measuring progress, so that you know that you are moving towards your goal – or that you are not making progress, and you need to do something about it. When you set objectives, it is important to state them in such a way that you will be able to measure whether you have achieved them or not. And they should be stated as results – in other words in terms of real change, not just things that you plan to do.

This means setting objectives that are specific and timetabled. You should state as precisely as possible what you seek to change, and indicate a date by when you hope to achieve it.

Your objectives need to be informed by your analysis of the types of approach that will work. They should be derived from your previous assessment of the external environment and the internal realities of your situation. (SWOT analysis, stakeholder analysis, and force-field analysis are three useful tools for this task.) Your objectives should be realistic steps which lead to concrete change that will contribute to achieving your ultimate goal.

Once you have stated your objective in this way, you should reflect on whether it is actually achievable in the terms that you have suggested.

The following case study demonstrates how the Slovak NGO Working Group developed objectives as the focus for their action, and how they linked the formulation of their objectives with their detailed action planning.
Pathways to change: Slovak NGO Working Group

During the 1990s, weak export controls encouraged numerous irresponsible government-licensed arms transfers from Central and Eastern Europe. Today, transparency in the arms trade and controls on arms exports are a matter of concern not only because without them human rights are abused and development is undermined, but also because they are a requirement for membership of the European Union.

Although Slovakia, aspiring to membership of the EU, has already officially supported the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports, it has not so far taken any practical steps to implement its provisions. In Slovakia, official data relating to the production, holding, and export of arms are still very limited. There are no official government reports on arms exports, and no mechanisms in place for parliamentary scrutiny and government accountability. A culture of State secrecy is still deeply rooted in Slovakia – especially on matters of security – and, under current law, commercial arms-trade information is classified as a State secret.

The Slovak NGO Working Group has ambitions to change this situation and persuade the government to publish an official Annual Report on Arms Exports. It believes that increased transparency and parliamentary accountability will lead to strengthened national and regional controls on arms exports.

To achieve this goal, the Working Group’s strategy of influence is to work through six channels: NGO representatives; independent specialists and academics from research institutes; parliamentarians; the media; government officials; and defence-industry representatives.

The Working Group identified seven steps along the pathway to achieving the final goal. These were outlined as follows:

1. Identify all governmental representatives working in the field of arms-export controls.
2. Strengthen NGO involvement in the monitoring of these issues.
3. Improve co-operation between NGOs and government bodies responsible for arms-trade issues.
4. Convince parliamentarians and the media of the need to take an active interest in monitoring arms-trade issues.
5. Organise an NGO round-table and an experts' round-table, together with appropriate media work.
6. Publish the first independent annual report on Slovak arms exports and present the findings to parliamentarians, the public, and the media.
7. Persuade the Slovak government to publish an official Annual Report on Strategic Export Controls, and discuss with it the scope and content of such a report.
These objectives have formed the basis for planning more detailed activities. Monitoring against these objectives continues, based on the following means of verification:

- consultations with project partners;
- interviews with government and civil servants at the beginning and end of the project, to track the changes in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour;
- tracking the changes over time in the language of official letters and other responses from government;
- identifying the type and amount of information supplied by government civil servants following the change in legislation.

Progress to date includes the following:

- The creation of an arms-trade database, cataloguing contact details of government officials, MPs, advisers, ‘umbrella’ defence-industry organisations, producers, export companies, NGOs, and journalists. (This relates to Objective 1, above.)
- A growth in the number of groups and individuals working on arms-trade issues in Slovakia, and a strengthening of the cohesion of the Working Group. (Objective 2)
- Increasing media awareness of arms-trade issues through establishing contacts with selected journalists and exchanging information; creating an image of the group as consisting of independent experts on arms-trade issues, who are now contacted not only by journalists but also by everybody else who would like to discuss or confirm information and data related to this field. (Objectives 3 and 4)
- Three annual NGO/government round-table meetings have been organised, attended by governmental officials and defence-industry representatives, which help to create the conditions for further exchanges of information, knowledge, and experiences. The organisers reported that these round-table meetings were the most effective of all the instruments for achieving progress, providing a major channel for lobbying. (Objective 5)
- The first Independent Report on Slovak Arms Exports was presented to an expert audience of NGOs and journalists, attracting media and public interest in Slovakia and abroad. (Objective 6)
- Government officials have declared their readiness to publish an Annual Report, following a change in the legislation on secrecy matters. For this reason Parliament has been identified as the most important target institution for the next phase of the campaign. (Objective 7)
Developing an action plan

All action planning depends on local circumstances. However, such a plan always involves matching resources with objectives and with projected activities. Your activities are the means by which you will achieve the change identified in your objectives. Ensuring that you identify the most appropriate and effective action to achieve your objectives is fundamental to the success of your work.

Key questions to address

What activities will we undertake? What resources do we need?

Consider these two questions together in your action planning. To achieve each objective that you have set yourself, you should state what tasks need to be done, and in what sequence they need to be done. Then for each task, answer these questions:

- Who is responsible for getting it done?
- By when does it need to be done?

As when setting your objectives, you will need to build your action plan around the available opportunities for influencing people, institutions, or events. To remind yourself of the opportunities that you have previously identified, check the SWOT analysis that you conducted during earlier phases of your planning. (See pp. 84–87 for further information on conducting a SWOT analysis.)

Remember that your resources include staff time, and appropriate skills and competencies, as well as funding and other financial resources. In answering these questions, you should be realistic about your own capacity. If you do not have the resources that are adequate for the task that you are setting yourself, you need to identify how you will get extra resources: activities to achieve this then need to be included in your action plan. Remember to draw on all the strengths of your network or wider group of allies to fill any resource gaps that you identify. The alternative is to decide on a less ambitious set of objectives. Remember that at all stages in planning you should review where you have got to and, if necessary, amend your objectives.

An excellent way to organise your action planning is to produce a Gantt chart. See Planning Tool 9 on page 124 for details of how to do this, with an example of a chart created by the Serbia and Montenegro Red Cross.

Have you anticipated changes in circumstances?

You are liable to encounter both obstacles and opportunities. As an organisation, you need to be adaptable enough to respond to events as they occur. Even the best plan can become irrelevant very quickly, if the situation changes. As far as possible, your planning should prepare you for this. Ensure that your plan is
flexible by building in consideration of contingencies, so that you can adapt to changing circumstances as they arise. So-called contingency planning involves asking the following questions:

- How might the political environment change? How would this affect our work? How would we react if it happened?
- How might those whom we are targeting, and others, respond to our actions? How might this affect our subsequent activity? Have we taken this into account in our planning?

Look at the issue from every angle. Think about what might go wrong, or what might go better than you expect. Get others to test your plan. Think about external events and deadlines and how they might affect you. And keep planning, reviewing, and revising as circumstances change. Above all, bear in mind that the plan is just a tool to help you to reach the goal: if a really important opportunity arises unexpectedly, you will probably want to seize it, even if it delays your planned activities.
Planning Tool 9: Timelines – Gantt Chart

A Gantt Chart is a horizontal bar chart, developed as a production-control tool by Henry Gantt, an engineer. For a practical application, see the example of project planning by the Serbia and Montenegro Red Cross below.

Context

A Gantt chart pulls together the various elements of your plan and makes it clear who should be doing what, and when.

Purpose

Gantt charts have many uses. They provide a good way of displaying your action plan. They make your plan clear, so that all those involved share an understanding of what needs to be done, and they know when specific actions have to be completed, to ensure timely project delivery.

Such a chart lists the activities in an easy-to-read timeline, and it can help to reveal the relationships and the dependencies between activities. It is also a practical way to ensure that resources are not too thinly allocated at any one time.

Gantt charts are useful for sharing information about the plan, and they can be used as a basis for monitoring and reporting on progress.

Method

For each channel, or area of work:

1. List all the activities that you need to undertake. (Writing them on sticky Post-It notes may make it easier to arrange them.)
2. Arrange them roughly in the order in which they should happen.
3. Identify the likely duration of each activity.
4. Transpose this information on to the Gantt timetable (using the template).
5. Ensure that your activities are linked to any relevant external events or deadlines.
6 Ensure that the plan is synchronised – in other words that in all cases the things that need to happen in advance of a particular task have happened.
7 Ensure that you have adequate resources available to do all the work; if this is a problem, consider delaying or rescheduling some of the tasks.
8 When the chart is complete, allocate responsibility to named individuals for the completion of specific activities.

Notes

Gantt charts and similar forms of project planning are available as computer software; they can be very useful in this form, if you have access to a computer.

Example

In September 2001, the Serbia and Montenegro Red Cross launched a Small Arms Campaign to challenge and change public attitudes towards the proliferation and misuse of small arms. Figure 2.16 summarises some of the key steps that led to the launch.

Figure 2.16: Timeline for the launch of a small-arms campaign by the Serbia and Montenegro Red Cross

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>1. PREPARATORY PHASE</strong></td>
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<td>appoint co-ordinators</td>
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<td><strong>2. ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO RED CROSS</strong></td>
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<td>discussion with government and</td>
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<td>discussion with media</td>
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<td>discussion with opinion leaders</td>
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<td>evaluate the campaign so far</td>
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<td>analyse the plan for the next phase</td>
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<td><strong>3. PUBLIC CAMPAIGN</strong></td>
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<td>launch the public campaign</td>
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</table>
- **Preparatory phase**: The small-arms campaign was a new activity for the Serbia and Montenegro Red Cross. Owing to that – and because of the sensitive nature of the issues – it was necessary to prepare carefully for the campaign. It was decided to use existing structures, adapted to the needs of the campaign.

- **Activities within the Serbia and Montenegro Red Cross**: The first and most important task within this phase was to spread awareness about the campaign, in order to mobilise Red Cross people for working on it. In addition, in this phase it was planned to identify possible partners and provide support for appropriate government bodies.

- **Public campaign**: The campaign was planned to start in September with a launch, followed by a slow acceleration, gradually introducing new activities and means of publicising the initiative.

---

**Figure 2.17: Template for a planning chart**

Name of project: _____________________

time — divided into days/weeks/months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area or phase of activity 1</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>action 1</td>
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<td>action 2</td>
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<td>etc.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area or phase of activity 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>action 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>action 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Etc</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area or phase of activity 3</th>
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Etc
Planning activity: summary and conclusion

In this section of the handbook we have shown how, having identified the best ways of influencing your target, you should develop a more detailed plan of action. Essentially this involves

- plotting a pathway to your goal
- identifying how activities, resources, and objectives fit together.

This section introduced one tool designed to help you to focus and order your analysis during this phase of planning:

- the Gantt Timeline

Once you have produced your plan, it is time to implement it.
Phase 5: Implementation and monitoring

Introduction

As you implement your plan, you should always monitor your progress. This phase in the process is important because it helps you to identify what is working and what is not working. It also helps you to learn and to be adaptable, modifying your strategy and tactics as events develop.

As you find out more about the context in which you are operating, and as the situation changes, you should be prepared to revise the objectives that you established earlier. Effective monitoring, which involves comparing actual progress against objectives, should help you to do this appropriately. It may also be important for you to monitor the actions of others, so that you can identify and comment on their successes and failures, and above all learn from them. To do this, you need to gather information about the following:

- what you – or others – have been doing;
- the results achieved in key areas as a result of these interventions;
- the environment and the way in which it is changing, as a result of your interventions or for other reasons.

Developing a framework for monitoring

Key questions to address

What indicators will you use to monitor your progress?

Whether you are monitoring or evaluating your own work, or attempting to assess the effects of the work of others, you will need to state clearly what kinds of evidence you will consider in order to determine progress. These are your indicators.

Remember that an objective is a successful result: an indicator is some form of evidence which will measure progress (or lack of it) towards achieving that objective. Don’t set arbitrary targets for your indicators (such as ‘a 30 per cent fall in violent crime’). Often a direction of change will be enough (‘a continuous fall in violent crime’). See Planning Tool 10 on page 131 for information on how to set indicators and their means of verification.
If you are assessing your own work, the indicators that you establish will relate to the objectives that you originally set (see Phase 4: Planning the Activity). When assessing the intervention of others, you may wish to use their own criteria, or relate their work to those things that you consider important.

**What means of verification will help you to measure progress?**

In most cases you will need to compile a range of evidence from a number of different sources. These sources of information that you will use to track your indicators are called the *means of verification*.

**How will you report on your progress to stakeholders?**

You should not forget that there will be a number of stakeholders who would benefit from knowing how your programme of work is progressing. Their opinions will also help you to judge if you are making progress. Being able to demonstrate success to those who support you or to those whom you are trying to influence is extremely important, so you should take time to ensure that this is done regularly. This group could include, for example:

- the individuals and communities whose lives you hope will be improved by your intervention
- project funders
- partners and allies
- policy researchers
- other civil-society organisations or governments interested in your work.

Each of these groups will have its own distinct communication needs, so when planning your schedule of work you should allow space and time for communication with them.

**How will you use the information that you gather in order to amend your programme of action?**

When your monitoring shows that your progress is diverging from the objectives that you have set, you have three basic choices:

- Change your work in order to refocus your efforts on achieving your objectives (if, for example, something you have been doing has not proved to be as successful as you had hoped). What you learn should give you good ideas for alternative strategies.
- Revise your objectives (if, for example, it is obvious that for some reason the original objectives are no longer realistic, or no longer relevant).
- Continue without change (if, for example, you judge that any difference is not a serious one).
As you measure your progress, make sure too that you take the time to celebrate and enjoy your successes.

For more advice on research techniques, see ‘Gathering information through research’ in Part 3 of the Handbook.
Planning Tool 10: Setting Indicators

Setting indicators is vital for monitoring progress.

Context

You should establish monitoring systems at the beginning of the project. This will allow you to make periodic judgements about your progress and adjust your work accordingly. From the outset, you should clarify what you are going to measure and then decide on the means of gathering the information that you need.

Purpose

Indicators are your measures of progress: tools for you to monitor your programme of action. Indicators must relate to the objectives that you have set. The task of monitoring progress can become very time-consuming, and there is a danger of wasting time in monitoring the wrong things. The tool presented here is useful because it makes explicit the links between your objectives and the indicators and means of verification that you will use.

Method

Using the template for setting indicators, consider the following questions in relation to each of your objectives.

1. What are the important pieces of evidence that will show whether this objective is being met, or not? These are your indicators.
2. How you might gather this information: what are the main sources and techniques that you will use? These are your means of verification.
3. Include the gathering of this evidence and the reviewing of progress in your plan.
Project goal: a substantial improvement in the quality of life and a change in the general perception of danger by those who live and move through the cities of the State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Indicators (measures of progress)</th>
<th>Means of verification (sources of information used to assess progress)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Re-registering available firearms in the State of Rio de Janeiro.</td>
<td>Reductions in the following:</td>
<td>These indicators then formed the basis for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the project. The methods included collecting both qualitative and quantitative data from the following sources:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Voluntary surrender of 30,000 firearms.</td>
<td>• homicide rate</td>
<td>• Police, hospital, and coroners’ reports – before, during, and after the campaign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Apprehension of 40,000 illegal arms.</td>
<td>• rate of gun-related injuries</td>
<td>• Police reports of the use of arms in robbery, domestic violence, drug-related crime, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Application of existing law to control the illegal carrying of firearms.</td>
<td>• number of firearms in circulation</td>
<td>• Police statistics on the numbers of arrests made for illegal possession of a firearm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Introduction of a new law to restrict the commercial arms trade.</td>
<td>• use of arms</td>
<td>• Numbers of civilians wounded or killed in confrontations with the police.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• number of police injured and killed</td>
<td>• Qualitative and quantitative assessments of police efforts to retrain officers involved in firearms incidents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• number of civilians injured and killed by the police</td>
<td>• Monitoring police efforts to devise new strategies to minimise the use of firearms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• number of incidents involving the use of arms in domestic and public spaces</td>
<td>• Monitoring police use of ammunition.</td>
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<td>• Interviews with focus groups representing specific segments of the public to assess perceptions – e.g. youth, residents of shanty towns, middle-class professionals, gun owners, community leaders, law-enforcement officials.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Media coverage of the campaign.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Monitoring the numbers of arms exchanged and firearms re-registered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Interviews with participants in arms-exchange and firearm-registration campaigns to assess their motivation to take part.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ethnographic observation.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Quantitative monitoring of victim-assistance programme (numbers and types of assistance provided).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Qualitative assessment of the impact on victims and their families.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2.19: Template for setting indicators

Objectives → Key measures of progress → Sources of information [means of verification]

Objective 1

Objective 2

Etc
Implementation and monitoring: summary and conclusion

In this section of the handbook we have argued that, as you implement your plan, you should always monitor your progress. Essentially this involves the following steps:

- gathering information about what have been doing and how the external environment is changing – as a result of your interventions or for other reasons;
- identifying what is working and what is not working; changing strategy and tactics as events develop.

This section introduced one tool designed to help you to focus and organise your analysis during this phase of planning:

- Setting Indicators
**Phase 6: Evaluation**

**Introduction**

You should continually evaluate your programme, using the evidence that you gather from your monitoring systems. It is also important to conduct a more formal and structured evaluation at the conclusion of the programme.

This phase in the process is important in enabling you to use limited resources most effectively, for the following reasons:

- It allows you to look back and make judgements about past effectiveness (information which might be of interest to stakeholders such as funders).
- It allows you to learn from experience to improve future practice.
- It helps you to understand whether your actions have been as efficient as possible in utilising your resources to create change.

An important concept in evaluation is *impact assessment*. An impact assessment considers the links between the action that you take and any resulting changes in people’s lives.

It is very difficult to prove without doubt that your programme of action has directly resulted in specific political and social changes. It is even more problematic to establish links between your programme of action and the impact on beneficiaries. This is because you are operating in a complex environment in which your own interventions don’t take place in isolation from the activities of others, from the local context, or from the economic and political situation in which you are working.

What you can realistically aim to do, however, is to develop a reasonable argument to demonstrate whether your work has contributed to change. You can do this by gathering a range of evidence. Individual pieces of evidence, viewed separately, may not seem significant; but it is sometimes possible to draw reasoned conclusions from a critical mass of evidence by using a range of information sources, both qualitative and quantitative.
Tools for evaluation

Key questions to address

When you evaluate your work, you should gather the widest possible range of opinions. From these various perspectives, you can build up an overall picture of the contribution that you have made. All measures are affected by some degree of subjectivity. You need to be constantly aware of this as you design and implement your evaluation programmes, even being prepared to challenge the underlying assumptions of the approach that you take.

Where possible, you should set up monitoring systems so that you can cross-check your findings. To do this, you should involve people with a range of skills, experience, and points of view; and try to ensure that information about the same thing is collected in different ways from at least three sources, to ensure that it is reliable.

In designing your evaluation, you should consider the following questions:

Who should participate in the evaluation? How? On what terms? When?

If you want to assess changes in people’s lives, it is essential to take account of the opinions and judgements of the intended beneficiaries. To do so adequately, you need to recognise and plan for diversity: allow for factors such as gender, class, ethnicity, religion, disability, and age, all of which tend to affect people’s status, perceptions, values, and priorities.

Many evaluations take as their starting point the idea that affected communities are best placed to analyse their own situations and decide how the information is used, rather than for this to be done by external evaluators. Your evaluation activities should be performed in partnership with community members. Your plans and methods should be flexible, and you should be willing to review your findings continually, to decide how best to continue.

It is important too to try to evaluate how your work has affected people at different levels (individual, family, community, region, etc.). This helps you to develop a more coherent picture of what has changed, who has benefited, who has not benefited, and why.4

Think about the participation of the following audiences in the evaluation process:

- beneficiaries: those whose lives will be improved if you achieve your goals
- local community organisations and groups
• those who have been working on the issue within (and in partnership with) your organisation
• decision makers and government officials
• journalists and academics
• wider public audiences
• donors
• non-stakeholders (i.e. people who have not been involved in the work you are assessing) acting as a control group (against which to measure what has changed because of your work rather than because of other developments that would have led to the changes anyway).

Who will conduct the evaluation?

• Will you use internal and/or external evaluators?
• How can affected communities be involved in helping to analyse their own situations?

When should the evaluation be conducted?

In addition to evaluating your programme on completion, you may wish to set markers throughout its progress. Your evaluation process could, for example, include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Periodic partner reviews</th>
<th>To review relationships, procedures, and progress against targets and agree contingency action as necessary.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term review</td>
<td>To review progress towards goals and to reassess the programme’s strategic direction at the halfway point in its implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion report</td>
<td>To identify what went well and what did not go well, as a basis for establishing and disseminating lessons learned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Against what outcomes should the evaluation be conducted?

You should evaluate your programme against the objectives that you have set: have your objectives changed as your work has progressed? You should also evaluate against specific indicators that you may have identified in order to quantify the change that you desire.

Using what methods?

• How can you ensure that you are hearing from a range of voices and seeing things from a range of perspectives?
• How will you ensure that you gather sufficient data and information to make a reasonable judgement of the difference that your intervention has made?

See comments in section 3, ‘Gathering information through research’, in Part 3 of the Handbook, for some ideas of the various methods you could use.

**How will findings and lessons learned be disseminated?**

• Who needs to know the results of the evaluation?
• How and when will you share the information with them?

**How will recommendations be followed up?**

• What systems do you have in place within your own organisation to learn from evaluations and other reviews?
• Can you identify specific actionable recommendations: particular things that you and your organisation will do differently as a result?
• How will you encourage others to think about the implications for their work?

**Evaluation of processes: questions to address**

A process evaluation reviews the mechanics of a project. At its simplest level, this can be achieved by asking the following questions:5

• Has work been well organised and well communicated?
• Did your techniques function properly?
• Were the people whom you reached the ones whom you were seeking to influence?
• Were the selected targets and channels the appropriate ones?

**Evaluations: summary and conclusion**

In this section of the handbook we have argued that at certain times it will be appropriate to conduct a more formal and structured evaluation of your progress. Essentially this involves:

• looking back to make judgements about past effectiveness
• looking forward to improve future practice.

Tools and approaches to use in evaluation are explored in the research section in Part 3 of the handbook.